

WASHINGTON, DC-Today, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 3090, the Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act. The bill is a victory for Members of Congress who have been calling for a simple, direct unemployment benefits package since September 11th. About 80,000 Americans are losing their unemployment benefits each week and according to one estimate, 1.6 million people have exhausted their benefits since September.

Congressman Blumenauer said, "The current economic downturn has had a tremendous impact on the Pacific Northwest. The State of Oregon, in particular, has the highest unemployment rate in the country. Some of our most important market sectors, such as technology and agriculture, have been hard hit in the last year. This legislation will help workers in our state and our nation until they get back to work."

The legislation includes the thirteen-week extension of unemployment benefits that the Senate has passed twice and also extends various non-controversial expiring tax provisions for two years. It provides tax incentives to rebuild New York City, gives a 30% bonus depreciation for three years and contains temporary relief for businesses suffering losses by providing a five-year carry back for those net operating losses. The bill does not include any of the controversial tax breaks included in earlier Republican bills like the health care tax credits, repeal of the corporate minimum tax, or acceleration of rate reductions. The package does not, however, expand health care for unemployed workers.

For more information on Congressman Blumenauer's work on economic issues, please visit his web site at <http://www.house.gov/blumenauer/>.